

# **BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE SHADOW AUTHORITY**

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 2019**

### **Present:**

Councillor Michael Weinhonig - Chairman  
Councillor Lisle Smith – Vice Chairman  
Councillor Stephen Bartlett  
Councillor Mike F Brooke  
Councillor Ian Clark  
Councillor David d’Orton-Gibson  
Councillor Fred Neale  
Councillor Marion Pope  
Councillor Philip Stanley-Watts  
Councillor Ann Stribley  
Councillor Chris Wakefield

### **Also in Attendance:**

Councillor Jane Kelly

### **Officers in attendance:**

Tanya Coulter, Monitoring Officer  
Graham Farrant, Chief Executive  
Jill Holyoake, Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer  
Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist  
Julian Osgathorpe, BCP LGR Programme Director

## **82     Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Anderson, Claire Bath, Malcolm Farrell, and Sue Spittle.

## **83     Substitute Members**

Councillors Philip Stanley-Watts and Ann Stribley were substitute members for Councillors Mark Anderson and Malcolm Farrell for this meeting of the Committee.

## **84     Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests or other interests.

## **85     Confirmation of Record of Decisions**

- a.     The record of decisions of the meeting held on 9 January 2019 was confirmed as an accurate record.
- b.     The Committee’s action sheet was noted, and the Chairman advised that any further information available in respect of item 40 from 1 November 2018 would be circulated to the Committee electronically.

**86     Public Issues**

There were no public questions or statements received for this meeting.

**87     Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Programme Update**

The LGR Programme Director introduced a report which provided the Committee with an update on activity within the programme since last reported in February.

The Chief Executive reported that the programme remained on track with the plan agreed by the BCP Joint Committee. Risks associated with the programme were now reducing to a minimum. There were a number of unresolved issues which were being addressed and he was confident that services would be in a position to deliver 'business as usual' from 1 April 2019.

The LGR Programme Director paid tribute to the work of elected Members and officers from preceding authorities for their achievement in delivering Phases 1 and 2 of the programme over the last 14 months. He explained that it was now necessary for the Shadow Executive to make some decisions to ensure that the programme continued to progress well into Phase 3 during the election period for elected Members. The report set out the required changes to the BCP programme governance architecture and accompanying delegations, including the transfer of future leadership, management and oversight of the programme to the new BCP Management Team with effect from 1 April 2019.

The report also outlined the next steps and required delegations to facilitate the procurement of a supplier to support the design stage of Phase 3 of the programme with immediate effect. The draft specification for the design and business case had been developed by the Organisational Design and Development Task and Finish Group and was attached at Appendix 1 of the report. The LGR Programme Director explained the rationale for not confirming a financial limit or estimated value of the contract at this stage. He referred to the current budget monitoring statement at Appendix 2 which confirmed that the programme remained within established resources. Due to the financial performance of the programme it was highly likely that the cost of the procurement for the Phase 3 design could be accommodated within these existing resources.

The LGR Programme Director responded to questions and comments from Members on the report, including the following main points:

- The remaining budget shown in Appendix 2 would be carried forward as earmarked reserves with effect from 1 April 2019
- The anticipated position was that any resources committed in the budget after 1 April 2019 would be the responsibility of BCP Council.
- The potential savings contained in the original submission to the Secretary of State prepared by Price Waterhouse Cooper two years ago were acknowledged to be at the ambitious end of the spectrum. This had been a joint submission, with the potential savings intended to cover the whole of the Dorset area not just BCP. It was now for the BCP Council to determine the extent of its ambition without being prejudiced by previous indications.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the update provided on the BCP LGR Programme and the recommendations in the report to the Shadow Executive Committee on 12 March be noted.

**88      Rapporteur Updates**

The Committee considered verbal updates from its appointed rapporteurs on strategic activity taking place under the four Service Delivery Boards, since last reported to the Committee in February:

**Children's - Councillors Bobbie Dove and Chris Wakefield**

Councillor Wakefield reported that the main areas for scrutiny were progressing well in accordance with the agreed programme. He explained that the concerns relating to MOSAIC had now been resolved. There had been a successful recruitment of staff in children's social care, providing a mix of permanent and agency staff to ensure caseload was manageable. Preparations were being made for the smooth transfer of casework from Dorset including arrangements for introductions and shadowing. He also provided an update on fostering issues. He thanked all teams in children's services across the BCP area for their work to ensure that vulnerable children continued to receive the services they required.

**Place/Environment & Economy (E&E) - Councillors Claire Bath, Marion Pope and Sue Spittle**

Councillor Pope provided an update on a number of areas following recent dialogue with the Executive Lead Member, Councillor Broadhead, including:

- Dorset Waste Partnership - a vehicle fleet procurement at the cost of £1.2 million was expected to be approved imminently, to ensure that BCP waste collections could operate across the full BCP area from April 2020.
- Assurance that recruitment was underway to ensure that Home to School Transport services for SEND would be ready for Day One
- IT issues across libraries in BCP area now resolved
- Budget on target with no risks flagged as red

**Adults - Councillors David d'Orton-Gibson and Lisle Smith**

Councillor Smith gave an update on one of the previously identified areas of risk relating to the implementation of the new IT system, MOSAIC. She reported that the issues regarding payments which had arisen in February had now been resolved. Assurance was provided that payments would be back in line by the end of March.

**Corporate - Councillors Ian Clark and Lawrence Williams**

Councillor Clark reported that all items arising from the Corporate Delivery Board were on track and flagged as green, with the exception of MOSAIC as detailed by Cllr Smith in her update. He had received similar assurance that the system would be running as it should in time for 1 April.

The Chairman thanked all rapporteurs for their role in keeping the Committee abreast of the main issues and risks within their Delivery Board areas over the last eight months. Although there were no further scheduled meetings of the O&S Committee he encouraged the rapporteurs to continue in their roles, to maintain dialogue with executive service leads during the important period of transition and provide feedback to Committee Members as appropriate.

**DECISION MADE:**

That the updates from rapporteurs be noted.

## 89 Overview and Scrutiny Headline Report

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Specialist introduced a report which gave an overview of the current and recent scrutiny priorities across the BCP area. The Committee had

requested each of the O&S bodies of the preceding authorities to provide a report on activity within their own area of work. These reports were set out in Appendices 1a - 1j.

The O&S Specialist explained that the Committee's role was to co-ordinate the information provided by the O&S bodies and pass this to the new BCP O&S function to inform its work programming and training plan. There was an opportunity for Members to comment on what they considered to be immediate priorities for the new O&S function. The O&S Specialist highlighted a number of issues for the Committee's consideration, including its own 'long list' of items, and the specific list of reports and associated timescales for children's and adult services. There were a number of recurring themes which featured in different appendices and Members may wish to consider whether these should be prioritised. The Committee was referred in particular to the statutory crime and disorder scrutiny function, the budget/Medium Term Financial Plan (including training needs), corporate asset investment and management, and housing related strategies. Members might also wish to consider recommending a risk focussed approach to setting future scrutiny priorities, in light of the Committee's successful use of this tool in agreeing its own programme of work.

Members highlighted the following points for further consideration during a comprehensive discussion on the report:

- The future of adult social care funding would continue to be a key issue for scrutiny.
- An early piece of work for BCP Council which was not included on the priority list was the proposed review of governance arrangements for the virtual school. It was noted that the revised arrangements had to be implemented by Autumn 2019.
- The importance of support for carers - but in particular the support services provided for young carers and the opportunities to bring together examples of best practice under the new BCP Council.
- The need to maintain awareness of the changing landscape for health services (CSR) and its impact on children and young people, especially in mental health provision.
- The need to ensure that items currently dealt with through different mechanisms in preceding authorities (e.g. corporate governance) were assigned to the most appropriate function in the BCP Council. Members understanding of the different roles played by O&S and Audit, and the need to avoid duplication of work across these bodies was raised.
- The role of the Council in supporting foster carers to navigate HMRC's Making Tax Digital programme.
- The new O&S function may wish to prioritise scrutiny items which could achieve 'quick wins' and give local residents a degree of confidence in BCP Council, such as the items already suggested in the headline reports on customer services and the formation of one Local Plan.
- An alternative view was that priority should be given to high risk areas, whether or not they covered popular/high profile subjects or elicited quick wins.
- A member highlighted a current adult safeguarding working party underway in the Borough of Poole which may need to continue in the new BCP authority.
- Members talked about achieving equity of services across BCP as soon as possible. The Chief Executive agreed that providing equitable services was a priority, as was the need to focus on particular areas (e.g. regeneration), alongside the retention of the unique nature of different parts of the BCP area. This would all form part of the BCP Corporate Strategy and would require a balance to be achieved.

- The new Council was an opportunity for Members to move forward and embrace a new ethos, particularly as there was likely to be a significant number of new Members elected onto the Council. Member training would have an important role in advocating a unified approach to new ways of working for existing and newly elected Members.
- There was support for continuing the role of Member Champions, and a recognition of their value in representing issues like dementia and children's services.
- A review of youth services across BCP to ensure a unified approach was supported.
- Scrutiny of IT should be undertaken through the lens of Phase 3 transformation, to consider the use of technology to support changes in service delivery and ways of working. The Programme Director commented that he hoped that this would be one of the more significant elements of the future BCP scrutiny work programme.

The Monitoring Officer provided some further information on the proposed induction and training programme for Members. She explained that the programme of essential training requirements and schedule of dates was included in the candidate information packs for the local elections, to ensure that all prospective candidates were aware of expectations at an early stage. It was envisaged that a more rigorous approach would be taken to developing and monitoring individual Member training plans. The O&S Specialist talked about the role of the new O&S Board in overseeing O&S training to ensure it was adequate. This would provide an additional mechanism for strengthening the O&S function.

Members also discussed the merits of going paperless and how this would be a culture change for some people. It was noted that some people were unable to operate electronically for a variety of genuine reasons and this would need to be taken into account.

The O&S Specialist confirmed that the points raised by Members in their discussion would be recorded in the minutes and passed onto the new O&S function for consideration.

#### **DECISION MADE:**

That Appendix 1 of the report be approved for submission to the new BCP O&S function together with the comments made by the Committee as set out in the minutes.

## **90 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan**

The Overview and Scrutiny Specialist advised the Committee that a copy of its Forward Plan would be passed to the new O&S Board, to ensure that any remaining items were not lost during transition. She reiterated the Chairman's comments regarding the ongoing role of the rapporteurs in keeping up momentum between now and the first meetings of the new O&S bodies in June.

The Chairman closed the meeting by offering his sincere thanks to all Members and officers across the BCP area who had been involved in supporting the work of the O&S Committee during its lifespan.

The meeting started at 6.05pm and finished at 7.25pm.

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**Wednesday, 6th March, 2019**